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## Volcano in southern Japan erupts

*The Shinmoedake volcano on Japan's Kyushu island, after lying dormant for a couple of weeks, resumes activity in a blast heard miles away. It was unclear if the eruption was linked to Friday's massive earthquake in the north.*

**March 13, 2011** | By Molly Hennessy-Fiske | Los Angeles Times

The Japanese weather agency has reported that a volcano in southern Japan began spewing ash and rock even as the country struggled to recover Sunday from the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami.

Japan's Meteorological Agency issued a warning Sunday that the Shinmoedake volcano resumed activity after lying dormant for a couple of weeks.

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The volcano is on Kyushu island, about 950 miles from the epicenter of Friday's magnitude 9.0 earthquake, which devastated much of the country's northeastern coast.

### Photos: Scenes of earthquake destruction

It was unclear if the eruptions were linked to quake, officials said. Japan lies on the "ring of fire," a seismically active zone where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are common.

The volcano last erupted Jan. 19 after remaining dormant for two years. Volcanologists had warned that a "lava dome" was growing inside the volcano's crater, although it was uncertain when or if the volcano would erupt.

Sunday's eruption, which was the biggest volcanic activity in Shinmoedake in 52 years, caused widespread destruction and panic. The blast could be heard for miles, and shattered windows four miles away, the BBC reported. Hundreds of people fled the area as the volcano spewed debris, including hot ash and rocks, more than 6,000 feet in the air, according to BBC reports.

### Videos of the earthquake

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